

**AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT:**

Please amend the Abstract of the Disclosure to read as indicated herein.

~~The present invention relates to~~There is provided an optical network element for use in a node of an optical network including a plurality of nodes which are interconnected so as to be capable of carrying traffic between selected nodes, comprising a local network management system including means for building up a supervisory connection between the network element and at least a network element of a further node of the optical network. ~~The invention is characterized in that the local network management system is installed to support an arbitrary network topology and to build up a survivable supervisory connection to at least one predetermined other node of the network so as the network element could be integrated in an optical network with arbitrary topology.~~ An optical network and a method of providing a supervisory network are also provided.